

SIERRA NEVADA CONSERVANCY
PUBLIC WORKSHOP
BISHOP, CA
APRIL 4, 2007

PROGRAM GUIDELINES
QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS

1. There are two seasons here, summer and winter. We agree with the promotion of tourism and recreation, we have totally different crowds.
2. We can't talk about economic development here without talking about housing. **The availability of housing is critical. Would like to consider land exchanges/swaps, and I don't see that here.**
3. Regarding Program Guidelines, page 6, "Provide Increased Opportunities for Tourism and Recreation": Need efforts to reduce the impacts of recreation, but also need to promote tourism related to recreation.
4. Regarding Program Guidelines, page 10, "Assist the Regional Economy through the Operation of the Conservancy's Program": A challenge is attracting industries that fit within the program areas. SNC might want to consider economic development zones. Maine has used this, and their example is worth considering. Look at businesses that would be attracted to the area if there were incentives.
5. Regarding Program Guidelines, page 15, "Eligible Applicants": In regard to the "Federal recognition of tribe" requirement, not all State agencies require this. SNC may want to examine relationships other State agencies, such as the California Department of Transportation, may have with non-federally recognized tribes. Tribes in this area are federally recognized.
6. I don't see much emphasis on land use planning or targeting specific activities for certain areas. **SNC should be facilitating resource-targeted efforts and local planning efforts.**
7. **Don't see much reference to wild landscapes, wildlife, and livestock here. These are important parts of the culture.**
8. Will SNC have guidelines regarding no negative impacts to cultural resources?
9. **Community advocates realize that a healthy community depends on a healthy environment. It would be great to see something about community benefits that would result from a project.** For example, livable wages as associated with project activities, or employment opportunities from a project.
10. **We are interested in tourism related to mining, power generation, water supply, etc.** We don't have a whole lot of agriculture. Mining, power generation, and water supply are the history of our valley. Mining is still important, those roads could be for recreation.
11. Does SNC look at or include concern about local economies?

12. **Help with sanitation/trash collection for those visitors who bring their own homes would be great, this is causing financial troubles.** The big thing last year was removing toilets, despite tourist pressure. Is this really what we want to do? How do we charge users (hikers, dump stations, rest areas)?
13. It seems the role of facilitator is implicit. SNC has a great opportunity to serve as a facilitator. U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Rural Development provides a lot of opportunities that many communities are not aware of.
14. There is a tremendous amount of publicly owned land. Land management is a key area where controversy occurs. It might be good to have a conflict resolution or meeting facilitation role for SNC.
15. **Mule/horse packing is an important part of cultural heritage here. SNC should look at the sustainability/viability of packing.** Cattlemen are an industry here too.
16. SNC as a “neutral convener” seems very helpful. Help with complex, not just controversial, issues is good.
17. There is a National Forest property, the Golden Trout Wilderness, that includes a couple of inholdings. In talking with the USFS, it’s possible to get fencing to exclude cattle to promote riparian restoration and fish habitat. Is SNC able to support this? There is an ecotourism component; Trout Unlimited could look at this as a good fishing area.

GRANT GUIDELINES QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS

1. What kind of money are you talking about?
2. Is the \$54 million all financed by bonds?
3. **Regarding Grant Guidelines, page 2, “Eligible Projects”: “protect and restore?” Those objectives seem to be resource-focused. Could “community stability” be part of these?**
4. Regarding Grant Guidelines, page 2, “Eligible Projects,” bullet 6: Should include physical improvements for education related to cultural and physical resources. We want to promote opportunities for education such as geology labs, and want to provide opportunities for universities to come up. Want to create higher paying jobs than conventional tourism.
5. Regarding Grant Guidelines, page 2, Eligible Projects,” item 4, bullet 5: Have concerns about road-to-trail conversion, about quad proliferation, and trail maintenance.
6. **Regarding Grant Guidelines, page 2: Eligible Projects,” item 4: Interested in incorporating “soil” or “soil stability/quality” rather than “land” to help filter water.** Soil can be extremely important to water quality. Soil degradation leads to soil acidity and acidic soil is detrimental.

7. A lot of grant processes say you have to have a Notice of Determination as part of the application. Need to be clearer on what those requirements will be related to CEQA.
8. Regarding Grant Guidelines, page 3, "Other requirements included": The requirement on the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), how will applicants demonstrate compliance? This is often such a long process; applicants may not know how long it will take when submitting applications. Would grant money cover CEQA activities? Is this an allowable cost in the grant process? Make sure the guidelines specify whether CEQA fits into weighting criteria.
9. Regarding Grant Guidelines, page 6, "Land Tenure": Is SNC looking to define "adequate tenure" more clearly? 10 years? 20 years? Who makes the determination that it's adequate?
10. Comment from fire safe council: For community grants, the requirement for tenure would be pretty prohibitive. Already commented on this at the Lake Isabella workshop.
11. Does the time frame for spending grants vary?
12. What are the time frames? Submit in September and then closure would be when?
13. Will SNC revisit the ratio of Strategic Opportunity Grants (SOGs) to Competitive Grants within the three years?
14. Will these be matching grants?
15. Will you talk about an anticipated timeline?
16. Are grants reimbursable or will SNC advance funds?
17. Will grant cycles be semi-annual, annual, or rolling?
18. Would an annual grant need to be spent in twelve months?
19. Will there be criteria regarding a grant recipient's ability to maintain and follow through?
20. Regarding the criteria for ranking grant applications: Is this a flexible ranking? It seems like SNC will be massaging applications through the process so that applicants will get a good idea of what is most important.
21. Regarding ranking criteria: SNC should judge on providing adequate designing rather than adequate design. Please clarify whether the application needs complete design up front. This is important for smaller entities too.
22. Non-recognized tribes can submit grant applications by establishing non-profit status. It is not a hindrance or barrier, Resource Conservation Districts (RCDs) could be great partners.
23. The term of the management agreement could include a variety of options, is SNC looking for examples?
24. How long will funding be available?
25. USFS and the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) spend a lot in litigation every year. Money they allocate for projects is sometimes diverted for this

purpose. Can SNC help pick up where they left off if it's a bona fide program? Can SNC help fund USFS/BLM programs?

OTHER QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS

1. Will you be sending out these notes?
2. We lost the only big industry that we had, the mine. The kind of land we could develop industry on belongs to the government. We need a way to buy land for industry and economic development.
3. I've done a lot of work with the local chamber of commerce. The types of business you might be looking at, a lot of jobs don't pay very well. I'll send SNC info on what Maine has done.
4. A key entity in the Owens Valley is the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power (LADWP). LADWP has lots of land and resources. Will they be key in working with SNC? Have they been invited to, or have they been attending meetings?
5. I work on grants everyday, primarily federal grants. This is a beautifully considered effort, a philanthropic, compassionate approach. The gist is on really helping the communities of the Sierra.
6. When will you have an SNC employee here? In the meantime we call Auburn?
7. Ninety-eight percent is publicly owned land. How will conservation easements impact the use of the small amount of private land?
8. You might want to talk about the Modoc line. That is an example of something that SNC has done. There are good opportunities to do something like that in the Southern Sierra.
9. The U.S. Forest Service (USFS) is doing an analysis of actively grazed allotments. There is a tremendous need to complete this analysis in order to comply with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). A Federally permitted grazing system is a key component to maintaining open space. We need to support sustainable grazing operations and their contributions to local economies. This needs to be addressed, otherwise permits will be invalid and at risk of being lost.
10. Will SNC use the California Cattlemen's Association to get operators interested or involved with SNC?
11. How much is regional collaboration a part of the process? Maybe look at efforts in one subregion and share that in other subregions.
12. Comment from California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CDF): CDF is filling staff vacancies. We will help provide resources for project planning, especially for rangeland and fire safety projects. You can call Larry Martinez at the Owens Valley Camp, (760) 387-2565.
13. What about staffing for the Mariposa office?
14. Fire prevention is a huge issue here. Have been working with tribes and have had great success. Also have been working with the Fire Safe

Council as a clearinghouse. Is SNC working with them? Can you how describe how SNC's concept of fuel reduction might work?

SUBREGIONAL ISSUES RAISED

1. Water quality
2. Reduction of wildfire risks
3. Education
4. Economic/industrial development
 - Housing availability
5. Working landscapes
 - Grazing allotments
6. Cultural resources
7. Living resources
 - Habitat restoration
8. Wastewater/sanitation infrastructure
9. Tourism/recreation
 - Trails
 - Mule/horse packing
 - Water supply
 - Mining
 - Power generation
10. Land use planning
11. CEQA/NEPA compliance
12. Land tenure